

The notion of a democracy is dependent upon the public's access to information. Although corporations are attempting to control all aspects of the media, the fact of the matter remains that the airwaves belong to the people. Media consolidation is another tool chipping away from our rock of democracy. When CEOs of major media conglomerates begin to use the station for their own interest rather than the interest of the public, when CEOs begin to use the media to further their own political or social agenda, the media is no longer a tool of the public. It is a travesty that this station is about to put its partisan values ahead of offering viewers dynamic and nuanced representations of candidates. As a citizen I am highly concerned that media corporations with the assistance of the FCC are slowly eroding the public's voice and source. Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.